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Preparedness is planning ahead and being ready for the unexpected. The recent flooding, tornado and wildfire disasters that have happened in this country in the last few months emphasize the importance of being prepared. Acts of terrorism and the threat of pandemic influenza also stress the need to know what to do if these things should occur.

What would you do if you and your family were faced with the same emergencies that many endured in recent weeks? Does your family have an emergency preparedness plan and could you be ready for this kind of situation? As difficult as it may seem to prepare for an unexpected disaster, the truth is that preparedness actions help people deal with these kinds of events much more effectively when they do happen.

### **How Do We Prepare?**

September is National Preparedness Month, and we invite you to learn more about how you can prepare yourselves and your family for the different types of emergencies that could happen where you live and the appropriate ways to respond to them. There are many resources that can help you get started preparing an emergency plan. Following are some simple steps can help you begin to build a successful plan.

- **Be Prepared**  
Learn what kind of emergencies can happen in your area and how you can prepare for them. Find out what resources you would need. Gather necessary items for your family and put together an emergency supply kit.
- **Make A Plan**  
Make a family emergency plan. Have your family know what to do and how to handle different situations. Establish a point where you would go in the event of an emergency, and how you would contact each other if you're not together.
- **Stay Informed**  
Educate yourself and stay informed about what's going on in your area. Learn about the emergency plans that have been established in your community and local government. Know where you would get news and information should a situation occur.

Being prepared and having an emergency plan is essential for protecting you and your family should a disaster occur. It is important to review your plan regularly and make sure in advance that every member of your family knows what to do in the event of an emergency. These are key steps to making sure your plan will work effectively and keep you and your family safe.

For more information on National Preparedness Month, making a family emergency plan and putting together an emergency supply kit, visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) or [www.bt.cdc.gov/preparedness/](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/preparedness/)